

Ethics and Boundaries

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Pos.#2

Should People Receiving Welfare Benefits Be Required

Drug Testing

Drug testing for eligibility of welfare benefits is ineffective. It crosses many boundaries. In fact, it goes against our fourth amendment rights which is, unreasonable search and seizure. This being the ethical issue. It not only impacts the client but forces impact to the child as well, affecting assistance for food stamps. If client becomes ineligible the child now suffers. This defeats the purpose of what DHHS stands for. They would be the one neglecting the child at this point. Putting child in jeopardy of malnourishment.

To defend the idea of required testing, would be that it could increase the possibility of the client getting preferred treatment. However, I do not feel they have the qualifications to decide a such diagnosis. Another thing It could do is slowdown improper use of benefits such as food stamps. Helping to eliminate the selling of the stamps for drugs. Even though people other than “addicts” abuse this. That being said I feel they are putting welfare recipients in a category that surely does not apply to all.

In researching numbers on how other states have found this effective or ineffective. I've discovered that for the amount it would cost for testing it would definitely not be worth tax payers money to do so. Out of 13 states and spending over \$200,000.00 for screening federal aid only 338 people tested positive. This after asking 260,000 people to submit to screenings for food stamps not one tested positive. In 2014 drug testing for TANF was ruled unconstitutional. Unless there was "reasonable suspicion". This right here to me would be the alternative. Or If a person has been convicted with a drug crime "while on" any assistance program. This could still fall under reasonable suspicion.

Now drug screening won't always prove someone needs help with treatment. Chances are if it is continued use it may be a problem someday, but if someone has surgery and they are on a painkiller and they test positive then how is it helpful or cost efficient to investigate that? As well as a positive for marijuana. Stateside this may be legal. This is not true federally so now a crime is made and will be on your record. This will not help with getting back on your feet with finding a job.

I honestly feel that with weighing out all the pros and cons. I really can not see how testing is beneficial to the client as well as the state. I truly believe the cost out ways the worth. With the funding for this project, we could be putting it toward more agencies or housing for addicts in recovery etc.

